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BOTANY.

The Cyclopedia of American Horticulture.¹—It has been the dream of years with Professor Bailey of Cornell to close the nineteenth century with a comprehensive index to American horticulture, viewing plants from the garden rather than the herbarium, and considering them as living, growing, varying things rather than bibliographical formulæ. To this end he spent a year in indexing all of the prominent American plant and seed catalogues, as a preliminary step, and then enlisted the interest and services of a large number of artists, expert gardeners and botanists, with whose coöperation he now has the work so well in hand that the first of the four volumes of which it is to consist is given to the public with the promise that the others shall be issued before the end of the year.

The volume already published, covering the initials *A* to *D*, is a quarto of over 500 pages, illustrated by a number of full-page plates, and nearly 800 cuts in the text; and, as is the plan of the entire work, is made first hand, from original sources of information, the botanical matter nearly all newly elaborated from the living plants, and the cultural directions often repeated by several growers experienced in methods adapted to American conditions. The editor very modestly says that he considers his book only a beginning, bringing together scattered data as a foundation for other studies. It is sufficient to say that it is well written, well printed, and, though unequally so, well illustrated.

The botanical treatment of so large and shifting a subject as the plants cultivated in a given country is a matter of some interest. Florists' and gardeners' varieties, because of their very transient nature and great number, are not characterized nor even enumerated, though the types under which they may be grouped are considered in the more popular genera of the moment. But the species and more permanent varieties are systematically handled, and the very real objection, that the systematic treatment of the plants grown in a single country deals with too shifting a quantity to have value of any permanence, is to a certain extent met by the introduction under the more important genera of supplementary lists of species which should be, or are likely to be, elements of our trade.

Nomenclature in botany is sufficiently difficult and complex to

¹ Bailey, L. H., and Miller, Wilhelm. *Cyclopedia of American Horticulture*. New York, The Macmillan Company, 1900.

furnish occupation for a large number of thinkers and writers, and when the transient forms evolved under the hand of man and advertised and marketed in accordance with prevalent business methods have to be taken cognizance of, it becomes almost a pigs-in-clover proposition. For some years past the leaders in horticultural thought have been agreed on the adoption of simple and short vernacular names for such forms, and official action tending to secure a consistent application of principles of good taste, good sense, and business wisdom has been taken at various times by the American Pomological Society, the representatives of the principal experiment stations, and the Society of American Florists, while in 1893 a botanical congress at Madison, on the report of a committee of international membership, endorsed the actions of these bodies with the recommendation that, for practical reasons, the great *Index Kewensis* be taken as the basis of nomenclature for the more permanent forms bearing Latinized names. These various conclusions have been made the working basis of the *Cyclopedia*, and although the partitioning of the work among many persons has made the results attained less uniform than would have been the case if one person had done it all, the book is going to place in the reach of makers of American trade catalogues a model which they can follow, and which it will be to their ultimate business interest to follow; while such action on their part will do very much to raise the semi-science of the botany of cultivated plants to a position where the general monographers of plants can take cognizance of and utilize its great array of facts — a result which in one way or another the first half of the twentieth century must see achieved.

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